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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development**

# Written statement* submitted by the Charitable Institute for Protecting Social Victims, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[31 January 2018]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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# Interactive dialogue with the special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism*

International terrorism has come to represent the greatest global threat to the goals of the United Nations: protecting international peace and security and promoting human rights. The number of extremist terrorist organizations has proliferated and their mode of operation has developed such that some now control large swathes of territory, have fractured the territorial integrity of States, are well funded and active in recruiting foreign terrorist fighters, and participate in protracted and widespread armed conflict. In the current global context, many of the gravest and most widespread human rights violations are perpetrated by or on behalf of non-State armed groups.

Any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed

International terrorism now represents the single greatest threat to the United Nations twin goals of protecting international peace and security and promoting human rights. The consequences of terrorism remain dire, not only for those directly affected by the gross violations of human rights perpetrated by terrorist groups, but also more broadly, through proliferation of asymmetrical armed conflicts and massive displacement of civilians from areas controlled by terrorist groups.

When a terrorist attack occurs, serious challenges happen. Victims and their families often need legal and financial aid to quickly to rebuild what they have lost.

Meanwhile no concrete steps have yet been taken to adopt an international instrument enshrining the rights of victims of terrorism. Such an instrument would contribute to a comprehensive and coordinated global counter-terrorism strategy and would ensure that victims of terrorism are not exploited by States for essentially political purposes. On the other hand there have still been few effective investigations, prosecutions or other means of holding accountable individuals involved in the secret detention, rendition and torture of suspected terrorists.

The United Nations should to be able to deliver a coherent and comprehensive response to the security and human rights challenges posed by international terrorism. A response which addresses the need to promote the prevention and suppression of terrorism; the need to prevent the spread of violent extremism; and the need to protect and promote human rights while countering terrorism.

Of the various responses to terrorist acts, the criminal justice response is the only effective, long-lasting reaction, consistent with the rule of law, to a phenomenon that ultimately will not receive a name other than a criminal offence. In strengthening the effectiveness of their criminal justice systems in particular regarding their ability to cope with large-scale crimes, Member States should pay specific attention to the support afforded to victims and to the particular challenges faced by victims of acts of terrorism.

The Charitable Institute for Protecting Social Victims and International Society for Supporting Victims of Terrorism urge the Human rights council ad its expert mandate holder to assure that:

- Victims of terrorism to sue the perpetrators of terrorism and those that support them in a Canadian court, including foreign states listed by the Government. Victims can seek redress for terrorist acts committed anywhere in the world
- to combat by all means, in accordance with the UN Charter as well as other obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

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*International Society for Supporting Victims of terrorism, an NGO without consultative status, also shares the views expressed in this statement.